

## Oakley Farm Slopes, Cheltenham - 20/01069/OUT

# Landscape and Visual Consultation Response

### Purpose of the note

This note provides an initial consultation response on the landscape and visual effects of the proposals submitted to Cheltenham Borough Council by Robert Hitchins Homes to build 250 units on Oakley Farm Slopes, Cheltenham and given the planning reference 20/01069/OUT.

A second note is a review of the findings of Chapter 6 of the Environmental Statement (ES) that addresses matters of landscape and visual effects associated with the proposals. There is also a summary to this second note as well.

### Structure of the note

This note has six parts, after briefly explaining methodology it provides;

1. A summary of the apparent landscape and visual issues associated with this Site;
2. A short summary of the current landscape character of the Site;
3. A review of the proposals as presented on the submitted master plan and in supporting documents such as the Design and Access Statement and highway access proposals;
4. Introduction to the panoramic views on the Site and from the surrounding area to illustrate the presence of the proposed Site in surrounding views.
5. Conclusions on whether the proposals are in accordance with relevant planning policies of the Joint Core Strategy, particularly SD6 – Landscape and SD7 – Cotswolds AONB and paragraphs 170 a) and 172 of the NPPF.
6. Without prejudice summary of suggested landscape Reserved Matters should you decide to grant consent for the proposals.

### Methodology

This note's author Stuart Ryder is a Chartered Landscape Architect with over 25 years' experience. He has been appointed by Cheltenham Borough Council (CBC) to provide this consultation response on the submitted landscape material.

He has attended Site with the Case Officer on the 18th August, 2020 to be introduced to the proposals, then took views and photography from urban and rural landscape areas that have views to the Site, considered OS Mapping, aerial photography and information from CBC and the Cotswolds Conservation Board (CCB). Before attending Site he had read the submitted ES landscape chapter, considered the landscape strategy drawing and reviewed the Design and Access Statement.

### Summary of apparent landscape and visual issues

On first consideration of the proposals the following landscape and visual issues are apparent;

#### Landscape issues

1. Fundamental change in character of a section of the Cotswolds AONB which is a nationally designated landscape asset;

2. Change to a section of the Cotswold escarpment as both an important landscape character type and landscape character area;
3. Major scale development apparently extending into the open countryside;
4. Potentially largescale change to the landscape setting to this part of Cheltenham’s settlement edge;
5. Loss of distinctive landscape features within the development Site including mature trees, sections of hedgerow and ridge and furrow agrarian features;
6. Change to retained landscape features due to an altered context;
7. Change to the existing road corridor character of Harp Hill where the Site access is proposed; and
8. Change to the setting of the Listed reservoir and pavilion structure at Hewlett’s Reservoir Site (this is also a heritage matter).

Visual issues

1. Change to views out from the edge of Cheltenham particularly from the B4075 Priors Road;
2. Change to views for users of the local footpath network;
3. Change to views from Harp Hill;
4. Change to views from the residential streets of Oakley Grange;
5. Change to views from other parts of the Cotswolds AONB; and
6. The cumulative effect on views when combined with other recent development in the area.

Summary of Site’s existing landscape character

The Site is divided into six field compartments of varying sizes but when viewed from a distance generally reads as three large fields. Figure 1 below provides an aerial image of the Site with the field compartments numbered for ease of future reference.

Figure 1 – Orientation image

Sainsbury’s off Prior Road	Farm buildings set to the east of Field 2	Field 4 practically isolated in centre of Site.	
			Field 6 to north east corner
Field 1 at west			Field 5 with increased tree numbers
Field 2 as largest central field			Field 3 on the highest part of slope.
			Listed chapel building
			Hewlett’s covered reservoir
			Harp Hill road running uphill

In describing landscape character it is useful to define the various landscape characteristics of the Site that when combined create the overall landscape character of the whole Site.

**Table 1 – Summary of landscape characteristics**

Characteristic	At the Site
Topography	<p>The Site has a very noticeable slope running down from the higher southern side adjacent to Harp Hill to the lower northern side adjacent to the Oakley Grange development. The change of level across the Site from its south east corner at 130mAOD to its north west corner at 78mAOD is a difference of 52m.</p> <p>The field boundaries of hedgerows run up and down the slope accentuating the appearance of the fall.</p> <p>There is also the infield topographical feature of ridge and furrow lines caused by years of ploughing in the same manner. The ridge and furrows run both up and down and across the slopes in places.</p>
Land-Use	Agricultural land use with all fields put to pasture. At time of visit no stock were grazing but sheep had recently been grazed on the fields.
Land pattern	<p>The Site is approximately 14.5 Ha in size and shows characteristic of both medium sized and smaller fields. Although characteristic of enlarged post Second World War fields the three larger fields 1, 2 &amp; 3 were in the same form in 1945 photography. The only partition difference is with Field 4 that has become an inclusion from Field 5. The pattern is rectilinear with the larger fields 1, 2 &amp; 3 and less formal with the smaller fields 4, 5 &amp; 6.</p> <p>In aerial photography and I suspect in low angled sun the ridge and furrow pattern will be evident.</p>
Vegetation	<p>Improved pasture grass largely as a mono-culture of agricultural pasture. The exception to this is Field 4 that is scrubbier and appears to have been formed through lack of grazing / cutting when a regression of aerial photography is viewed.</p> <p>The principle vegetative interest comes from the large open field trees which are positioned mostly in Fields 5 &amp; 6 and the mature native hedgerows that have not been cut in a number of years. The current hedge and tree pattern is evident in photographs from 1945 and have not fundamentally changed since then. They would have been in this form at the time of the AONB designation.</p> <p>The hedges and trees are attractive features in their own right. They also form a backdrop to this part of Cheltenham and help to make the Site readily discernible in longer views back to it from the AONB.</p>
Water and drainage	There are no evident watercourses or features such as ponds on the Site. This is not surprising given the heavily sloped nature of the fields.
Boundaries	Predominately native hedgerows set as both internal boundaries between fields and external hedges to the roads, gardens and paths that border the Site. Some have additional landscape merit with mature specimen trees set

Characteristic	At the Site
	<p>in their length. At the Site entrance there are now two dead mature trees left standing. They appear to have been dead for some time.</p> <p>Beyond the hedgerows lie residential houses to the north, to the west Public Footpath Cheltenham 86 and then houses off Wessex Drive, to the south Harp Hill road and then a line of generally large properties positioned to the south of the road. To the east is a mix of further residential development (Oakley Grange) combined with the open grass roof of Hewlett's covered reservoir.</p>
Built-form	<p>There are some buildings currently on Site set between Fields 2 and 5, they are a small collection of semi-derelict farm buildings including a Dutch barn and outbuildings. The farm house was recently demolished.</p> <p>As summarised above there is residential development set to every side of the Site with the exception of the south end of the east boundary which runs up to the covered reservoir.</p> <p>The reservoir has a number of small pavilion and lodge buildings to look over the Site but its boundary is generally open and marked by a fence with low key hedging. The reservoir is itself Listed and has a grassed and open flat roof that keeps visual and physical connectivity between the Site and wider AONB.</p>
Historical landscape assets	<p>The ridge and furrow pattern is worthy of further investigation and archival research should development occur at this Site. Likewise the existing veteran trees should be viewed as historical assets. The hedgerows may also be important hedgerows under the Hedgerow Regulations. Their size and number of species suggest they have been present on Site for a long duration.</p>
Accessibility	<p>There is limited accessibility onto Site with only farm accesses available. There are no public rights of way across the land but some signs of public trespass with desire lines running along the higher south side of the Site and gaps in the surrounding hedgerow patched-up to prevent access.</p>
Perceptual characteristics	<p>There is not a full sense of tranquillity or isolation at the Site given the road and houses that fringe it but there is a definite sense of a rural landscape set across the six sloping fields. There is however a sense if it is attractive and characterful in its own right with its mature trees and hedges and it is understandable why it was designated as part of the Cotswolds AONB.</p> <p>It allows elevated views out over Cheltenham from Harp Hill and acts as a green and pleasant backdrop and connection to the wider Cotswolds escarpment when viewed from Priors Road. There is a feel of the 'land that time forgot' about the slopes that still retain an attractive rural character.</p>

Overall the landscape character of the Site is as an attractive rural landscape with mature trees, full hedgerows and open sloping ground that combine to form a distinctive and scenic landscape area.

Landscape character information is provided in the Cotswolds AONB Landscape Character Assessment as produced by the Cotswold's Conservation Board (CCB). In terms of landscape type the Site is part of the Landscape Character Type 2 – Escarpment given its steepness and connectivity with the rest of this key landscape at the fringe of the Cotswolds. It is specifically identified as part of LCA 2C (Escarpment: Cooper's Hill to Winchcombe).

The Cotswolds AONB Landscape Strategy and Guidelines (LSG) for landscape type LCT 2 states that 'the escarpment is a distinctive and dramatic landscape' and that 'the combination of its elevation, and the steep slopes rising from the lowlands, make it a highly visible features and is therefore very sensitive to change.'

The escarpment is also listed specifically as one of the special qualities for the Cotswolds AONB increasing its value further.

The CCB have included guidelines for each of the landscape types and for LCT 2 these include:

- Maintain the open, dramatic and sparsely settled character of the escarpment.
- Avoid development that will intrude negatively into the landscape and cannot be successfully mitigated, for example, extensions to settlements onto the escarpment.
- Conserve pattern of settlements fringing the lower slopes and their existing relationship to landform.
- Ensure that new development does not adversely affect settlement character and form.
- Conserve the rural character of the road network

The CCB will I am sure provide you more information as to the value and character of this part of the AONB.

The Site was also the subject to the landscape character assessment (LCA) and development capacity work conducted by my Practice in 2015 and 2016 in the Landscape Character, Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment of Cotswolds AONB Within the Cheltenham Borough Administrative Area. It is the Oakley Farm Pasture Slopes Landscape Character Area (LCA). This LCA was produced as part of the evidence base for the then emerging Joint Core Strategy and found that the overall landscape capacity for residential development in this LCA was low.

It was considered to have a Farm Pasture Slope landscape character type (LCT) which is one of the different character types on the overarching escarpment area. The landscape character area LCA that the site is named after is the Oakley, giving it the title Oakley Farm Pasture Slopes.

To reach this assessment the visual sensitivity was judged to be High and the Landscape Character Sensitivity also. Set below is the appraisal bar for the Site and more can be read about its appraisal as LCA 7.1 (as it is referenced) at pdf pages 83 & 84 of the document.

Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Character Sensitivity	Overall Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Value	Overall Landscape Constraint	Resulting Landscape Capacity
High	High	<b>HIGH</b>	High	<b>MAJOR OVERALL</b>	<b>LOW OVERALL</b>

The quality and character of the Site has not fundamentally changed since it assessment in 2015 apart from the demolition of the farmhouse.

## Preliminary review of proposals

An Illustrative Masterplan drawing reference 333.9.3.9 Rev E has been submitted to demonstrate the main principles of the proposals and how up to 250 units could be accommodated on the Site.

- The main Site access for vehicles is indicated from Harp Hill where the access road would sweep round to the east to form one curving spine and a second spur running down to the west to form a second curving spine road.
- The roads are indicated as being tree lined as they run through public open space to the south (Harp Hill) side of the Site.
- The roads appear to be curved to aid them traverse the gradient down the heavily sloped Site.
- Secondary pedestrian accesses are indicated to the south east corner onto Harp Hill, two onto Public Footpath Cheltenham 86 to the west of the Site and an improved pedestrian route down to Priors Road using the current farm track into the fields.
- The built form is set to the north of the Site at the lower elevation and to provide adjacency with the Oakley Grange houses.
- The houses are primarily arrayed with the Site's contours running west east to make it more feasible to construct on the sloped ground.
- A break in the slope has been formed approximately a third of the way down it and is reinforced with a tree line to screen the proposed houses from the south side.
- Public open space is set to the south on the higher side of the development and is approximately 85m wide. It is described as having a country park character.
- New footpaths and the principal access roads run through the public open space.
- The mature trees appear to be largely retained within the Site albeit within a new context of built form.
- Not all the hedgerows are retained with the majority of the hedgerow between Fields 1 & 2 removed for housing development and gaps created in in the hedgerow between Fields 2 & 3, Fields 3 & 6 and Fields 5 & 6 to allow the main access spine road to run through them.
- A SuDS basin feature appears to be set at the lowest north west corner of the field.
- Proposed amenity tree planting is indicated along the sloped access road through the south side of the development.
- Further tree planting is shown to the south boundary and throughout the developed streets areas.

With regard to the effects the proposals would have on the Site the following observations are made;

- It would effectively remove the overall rural landscape character from the Site and effectively change it to an urban character.
- The public open space to the south of the Site will act as a recreational resource for local people but would again lose its rural characteristics with the o access roads running through it and its main land use changed.
- There would be official public access to the upper slopes of Fields 1, 2 & 3 where none exists at the moment, this access would not only be for the new residents but also other local people from the surrounding area.
- The usefulness of the steep sloping ground as public open space needs to be questioned with activity on it likely limited to walking.

- The presence of the main access road through the public open space will curtail some recreational activities and reduce the area's sense of remoteness.
- It is welcomed that the mature trees on Site have been largely retained but their visual qualities set within open fields will be lost as their new context is one of built form.
- The loss of internal hedgerow, albeit not total, will also partly remove a positive landscape asset and the pattern it sets across the fields.
- The SuDS basin unless skilfully designed and shaped to work as best as possible with the Site's ground levels could appear as a highly artificial feature on the sloped ground.
- The opportunity to see open sloping ground and understand how the sloped pasture is part of the Cotswold escarpment will be lost, or at the very least shrouded with development.
- The proposals have followed the easterly development line set by Oakley Grange that butts up against the Hewlett's covered reservoir but the quantum and density of the development is such that this would be seen as a major urban extension up the escarpment.
- The level change between the bottom north west corner of the Site (78m AOD) and the edge of development towards the north west corner of Hewlett's Reservoir (117m AOD) is 39m. This will make the houses appear to be running up the slopes in views from the north and north west.
- It would reduce the quality of the landscape setting of this part of Cheltenham.
- It would remove the Site's 14.5 hectares from the AONB by effectively removing the special landscape qualities of the Site that justify its designation as part of the Cotswolds AONB.

### Is the Site worthy of its AONB status?

With regard to the last bullet point the question may be asked 'Should this Site actually qualify as part of the AONB? As it sticks out as a salient on the very edge of the designation and appears as relic land from a different era?'

The research I have undertaken shows that the majority of the Site (Fields 2 to 6) have been part of the AONB designation from its inception in 1966 and then was actually expanded in 1990 by the AONB Boundary review to take in the westerly field (Field 1).

For land to stay within the AONB the 1990 AONB Boundary review had two primary landscape tests;

- the quality of the landscape is commensurate with the landscape quality in other parts of the Cotswolds AONB; and
- It exhibits similarities with the rest of the Cotswolds AONB in terms of landscape character.

With regard to the first test the then five fields and now six do display a landscape quality that is commensurate to other parts of the AONB. It is scenically attractive and even with development set on some of its sides it displays the special qualities associated with rest of the AONB.

In landscape character terms it retains many of the same features as the rest of the escarpment including the falling open slopes, a similar land use, an ability to look out to the west to the Vale of Gloucester and positive characteristics such as the mature trees and field patterns formed by the mature hedgerows.

For these reasons it is easily understandable why the Site was retained and in fact extended within the AONB in 1990 boundary review and still justifies its designation as part of the Cotswolds AONB.

Recent government announcements and recommendations in the Glover Report identify the Cotswolds AONB as a candidate National Park. The CCB is also identifying itself as a National Landscape in its branding material to emphasise the importance of its AONB status.

## Viewpoint photography

As explained above I attended Site in August on a dry, sunny day. I took the opportunity to visit viewpoints around the Site (with the owner's consent) and out on the wider escarpment to look back to the sloped fields to better understand how the Site appears in views to the eastern urban edge of Cheltenham.

The off Site viewpoints I visited were predominately the same as those suggested by CBC and the Cotswolds Conservation Board in their scoping opinion of the 6<sup>th</sup> June, 2019.

I took panoramic viewpoint photography on and off Site. The photographs were taken with a fixed 50mm lens and then stitched together afterwards in Adobe software again in line with the Landscape Institute's guidance.

The photographs are presented as a set of A3 sheets at the end of this note with the Site marked upon them with blue arrows showing its approximate extent and red arrows the amount of open ground visible from that viewpoint.

These photographs clearly demonstrate the open ground of the Site running into the urban form of Cheltenham. They illustrate the Site's positive character on the edge of Cheltenham and emphasise the adverse effect its loss would have on the town's setting when viewed from the surrounding escarpment.

However I would also like to draw attention to the considerable visual harm that would also occur for visual receptors at the urban edge of Cheltenham. This is particularly noticeable for the users of Priors Road in the area of Sainsbury's superstore (VP5) who would see the development replacing the current open, green backdrop with houses running up the majority of the visible open slope.

The potential views from Harp Hill road are more limited given the existing tall boundary hedge and are generally limited to the breaks in it. I note CBC's request to have the Harp Hill hedge cut before any LVIA photography was taken and this does not appear to have been done. This hedge would have the new access running through it suggesting a 55m wide gap to accommodate the indicated visibility splays. This width of gap will allow clear sight down the slope to the houses beyond. There would also be an adverse change in character to this part of the Harp Hill road corridor arising from the new entrance,

The quantum of housing and associated lighting whether it be domestic or street lighting will make the proposals very evident on the slope during the hours of darkness. This will not lead to the loss of an intrinsically dark sky but rather increase the amount of illumination in this part of the settlement edge and AONB.

I have not touched upon views from existing residential areas as these are not publicly accessible but I would anticipate considerable opposition from surrounding residents who will find the development a major change to their local visual amenity. Nor have I undertaken any form of amenity assessment to assess if right to light or privacy concerns are offended. However I anticipate that given a Site of this size any amenity challenges with regards to neighbouring properties can be overcome.

## Compliance with planning policy

### Policy SD6 – Landscape

This policy seeks to protect landscape for its own intrinsic beauty and how it benefits economic, environmental and social-wellbeing. The proposals neither protect its environmental quality as an



individual Site or the contribution it makes to the wider landscape in the area. There is no compliance with this policy.

### Policy SD7 – Cotswold AONB

This policy requires proposals within the setting of the Cotswolds AONB or in this case the actual AONB itself to conserve and, where appropriate, enhance its landscape and scenic beauty. The adverse landscape and visual effects of the proposals neither conserve nor enhance the setting to the AONB. The second policy point requires proposals to be consistent with the Cotswolds Conservation Boards (CCB) Management Plan which I do not consider they are. There is no compliance with either points of this policy.

### NPPF §170 a) – Landscape and Countryside

This is the paragraph that introduces the concept of ‘protecting and enhancing valued landscapes’. Often much time is expended arguing whether a Site or an area is a valued landscape but in this case it categorically is. This is due to its designation as a nationally important AONB landscape (objective assessment of a landscape requiring a designation to prove its valued status) and reinforced by the obvious Site qualities it displays (subjective assessment of the Site’s value). Therefore as a valued landscape the proposals neither protect or enhance the landscape and do not comply with this paragraph of the NPPF.

This harm to the valued landscape is acknowledged in the Applicant’s Environmental Statement where a **Moderate, Adverse Residual** effect is noted. My own review suggests it would be larger still at **Major, Adverse and Permanent**. Either Moderate or Major is classed as a Significant effect in the Environmental Statement’s methodology.

### NPPF - §172 – National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

The first sentence of §172 reads ‘Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues.’ These proposals will neither conserve or enhance the scenic beauty of the Cotswolds AONB so fail to comply with this part of the NPPF. It is suggested that great weight should be given to this fact in your decision making process.

### Suggested landscape reserved matters

This final section is a without prejudice summary of potential landscape reserved matters should you be minded to grant consent for the proposals. They include the standard landscape conditions but also more explicit requirements with regard to management of the landscape post construction.

1. Detailed landscape proposals for both hard and soft landscape areas;
2. Protective covenants to restrict development of remaining open space;
3. Soft landscape establishment care for the first five years post planting combined with a requirement to replace dead, diseased or dying stock on an annual basis;
4. Long term landscape management plan for all areas of public realm covering both hard and soft landscape features and how they will be managed for the benefit of both local people and wildlife;
5. Ensuring that the remaining hedgerows do not become part of private ownership but are instead retained and managed as a single entity for both the benefit of landscape and wildlife.
6. SuDS features management plan to retain its effectiveness in flood management but also as a piece of public open space;

7. Careful siting and design of areas of play (LEAP or NEAP) or other forms of recreation e.g. MUGA so they do not extend the sense of urban development further;
8. Lighting strategy to reduce the impact of the street and domestic lights given the prominent position of the Site with particular consideration given to the new access road and pedestrian safety on the link route to Priors Road; and
9. The protection of the proposed pedestrian access points and routes through the public open space in perpetuity.

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## List of viewpoint photography

The following four viewpoints were taken on Site from positions that are not publicly accessible and are presented to illustrate the landscape character of the Site.

- VP1 – View from Field 2 on Site looking south to Harp Hill
- VP2 – View from Field 3 looking east across Site to Hewlett’s Reservoir
- VP3 – View from Field 2 looking east across Site to Cotswold Escarpment
- VP4 – View from Field 1 looking north across Site and out over Cheltenham

The following four viewpoints were taken from publicly accessible positions from around the Site looking back to the position of the proposed development.

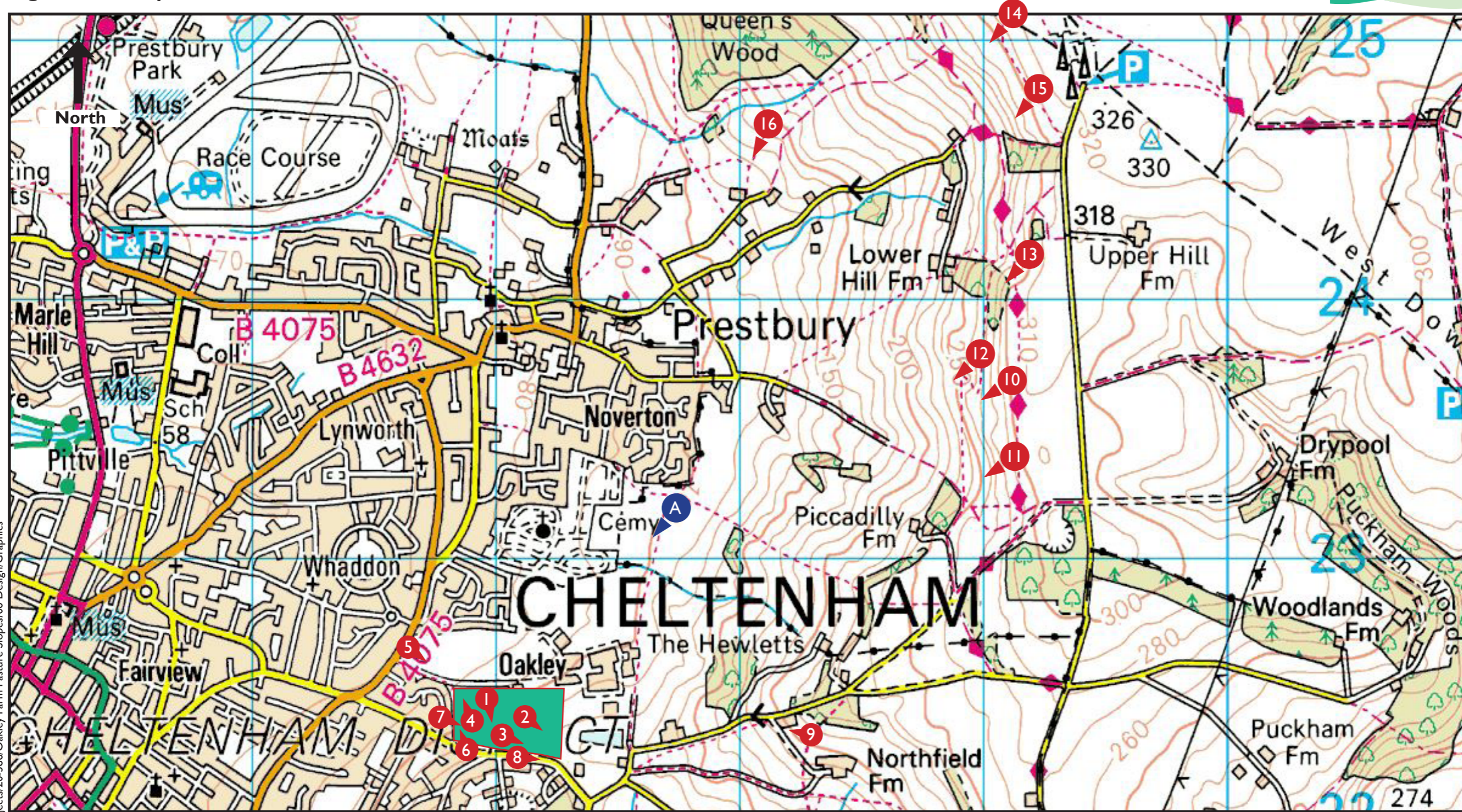
- VP5 – View from Priors Road to south east towards Site
- VP6 – View from Harp Hill looking north and east towards Cheltenham and the AONB
- VP7 – View from Footpath Cheltenham 86 looking east across Site
- VP8 – View looking east along Harp Hill in the vicinity of the proposed Site entrance

The final eight photographs were taken from the Cotswolds escarpment again looking back to the position of the Site on the escarpment and with the wider landscape of the settlement edge.

- VP9 – View from Charlton Kings Footpath 12 looking west towards Site
- VP10 – View from Cotswolds Way looking south west towards Site
- VP11 - View from Cotswolds Way looking south west towards Site
- VP12 – View from Bill Smyllie Reserve looking south west towards Site
- VP13 - View from Bill Smyllie Reserve looking south west towards Site
- VP14 – View from edge of Cleeve Common looking south towards Site
- VP15 – View from slope below Cleeve Common Masts looking south towards Site
- VP16 – View from near Noverton looking south west towards Site

# 20-386 - Oakley Farm Pasture Slopes

Figure 1 - Viewpoints Location Plan



**Legend**

- Viewpoint reference and direction
- Approximate site extents
- Suggested location for Cheltenham Circular Path viewpoint

- Notes**
1. Plan shows viewpoints VPI to VPI6
  2. Former GCHQ Buildings shown at Oakley,6
  3. Locations VP5 to VPI6 are publicly accessible.
  - 4.VPI to VP4 are views taken on site that are not publicly accessible

<b>Client</b>	Cheltenham Borough Council
<b>Site</b>	Oakley Farm Pasture Slopes
<b>Drawing Ref</b>	386-XX-XX-DR-L-001
<b>Revision</b>	
<b>Scale</b>	Not to Scale
<b>Date</b>	November 2020

Path:G:\NAS\Projects\20-386\Oakley Farm Pasture Slopes\06 Design\Graphics

Figure 1:Viewpoint I – View from Field 2 on Site looking south to Harp Hill



Access track up to now demolished farm house

Domestic and orchard planting near house setting

Properties of Harp Hill at the top of the Site

Sloping ground looking south up the hill is obvious

Date of photography – 18/8/20

Camera – Canon EOS 6D

Height of lens – 1.5m

Lens focal length – 50mm f-stop f/5.6

No. of photographs stitched – 3

Approximate distance to Site – On Site

**Notes**

1. This is the most 'domesticated' part of the site where the farm house was set and the remaining outbuildings are located.
2. It forms a small part of the lower north end of Field 2 and does not alter the more dominant rural character of the fields.
3. This view would not form a part of a LVIA process as it is not from a publicly accessible location, it is presented to illustrate landscape character of the site.

**RYDER**  
LANDSCAPE CONSULTANTS



**Client**  
Cheltenham Borough Council

**Project**  
Oakley Farm Pasture Slopes, Cheltenham

**Figure Title**  
Figure 1 - Viewpoint I

<b>Date</b> 21/10/20	<b>Scale</b> Not to scale
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<b>Job No</b> 20-386	<b>Figure No</b> 01 - Sheet 1	<b>Rev</b>
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# Figure 1:Viewpoint 2 – View from Field 3 looking east across Site to Hewlett’s Reservoir



Western extent of Oakley Grange development with wooded escarpment beyond

Ridge and furrow lines of Field 3

Listed pavilion at Hewlett’s covered reservoir

Highest part of site to the south east

Boundary hedge to Harp Hill

Date of photography – 18/8/20  
 Camera – Canon EOS 6D  
 Height of lens – 1.5m  
 Lens focal length – 50mm f-stop f/4  
 No. of photographs stitched – 5  
 Approximate distance to Site – Upper south side of Site

## Notes

1. Photograph taken from upper part of Field 3 looking to the site’s eastern boundary with both Oakley Grange properties and Hewlett’s covered reservoir to the east of the site
2. Ridge and furrow lines are evident in this part of the field.
3. This view would not form a part of a LVIA process as it is not from a publicly accessible location, it is presented to illustrate landscape character of the site.

**RYDER**  
 LANDSCAPE CONSULTANTS

**Client**  
 Cheltenham Borough Council

**Project**  
 Oakley Farm Pasture Slopes, Cheltenham

**Figure Title**  
 Figure 1 - Viewpoint 2

<b>Date</b> 21/10/20	<b>Scale</b> Not to scale
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<b>Job No</b> 20-386	<b>Figure No</b> 01 - Sheet 2	<b>Rev</b>
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# Figure 1:Viewpoint 3 – View from Field 2 looking east across Site to Cotswold Escarpment



Cheltenham edge

Chain of escarpment high ground and hills

Falling topography running from the south to north

Oakley Grange practically screened behind high hedges and mature trees of site

Approximate position of site entrance marked by dead tree

Hedge to Harp Hill to south side of road beyond

Date of photography – 18/8/20  
 Camera – Canon EOS 6D  
 Height of lens – 1.5m  
 Lens focal length – 50mm f-stop f/2.8  
 No. of photographs stitched – 4

Approximate distance to Site – Upper south side of Site

## Notes

1. View east illustrating the landscape linkage with the Cotswold escarpment landscape character area and type.
2. The scenic value of the mature trees and hedgerows is clearly evident in the view.
3. This is the effective entry point onto the site with the new access road entering near to the position of the dead tree and then running away from the viewer.
4. This view would not form a part of a LVIA process as it is not from a publicly accessible location, it is presented to illustrate landscape character of the site.

**RYDER**  
 LANDSCAPE CONSULTANTS

**Client**  
 Cheltenham Borough Council

**Project**  
 Oakley Farm Pasture Slopes, Cheltenham

**Figure Title**  
 Figure 1 - Viewpoint 3

<b>Date</b> 21/10/20	<b>Scale</b> Not to scale
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<b>Job No</b> 20-386	<b>Figure No</b> 01 - Sheet 3	<b>Rev</b>
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# Figure 1:Viewpoint 4 –View from Field I looking north across Site and out over Cheltenham



West boundary hedge and trees next to Footpath Chelt 86

Lone field tree in Field I would be retained with houses around it

Long distance views to Malvern Hills AONB

Urban edge of Cheltenham to north of site

Dashed red line marks the approximate position of the development built form on the slope (tree line would stand further up the hill)

Escarpment running north towards Bishop's Cleeve

Field 1 to Field 2 hedgerow

Date of photography – 18/8/20  
 Camera – Canon EOS 6D  
 Height of lens – 1.5m  
 Lens focal length – 50mm f-stop f/5.6  
 No. of photographs stitched – 5  
 Approximate distance to Site – On Site

## Notes

1. View from southern, higher end of Field I looking out across Cheltenham and the flat Vale of Gloucester to the Malvern Hills AONB as a distant backdrop.
2. The continuous nature of the Cotswold escarpment can be seen with it running to the north towards Bishop's Cleeve and Winchcombe.
3. Dashed red line is an approximation and not measured on site but guided by the position of the open field tree.
4. This view would not form a part of a LVIA process as it is not from a publicly accessible location, it is presented to illustrate landscape character of the site.
5. This view is similar to public VP6 from gap in hedge.

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**Project**  
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**Figure Title**  
 Figure 1 - Viewpoint 4

<b>Date</b> 21/10/20	<b>Scale</b> Not to scale
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<b>Job No</b> 20-386	<b>Figure No</b> 01 - Sheet 4	<b>Rev</b>
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Figure 1:Viewpoint 5 – View from Priors Road south east towards Site



Priors Road / Redmarley Road junction

Mature trees and hedges of Field 4-6

The open ground of the larger Fields 1 & 2 form part of open backdrop to the settlement edge

High ground of Harp Hill

Site provides an attractive open backdrop with a well treed character in this view

Date of photography – 18/8/20  
 Camera – Canon EOS 6D  
 Height of lens – 1.5m  
 Lens focal length – 50mm  
 f-stop f/5.6  
 No. of photographs stitched – 5  
 Approximate distance to Site – 250m

**Notes**

1. View from Priors Road with Sainsbury's as part of foreground.
2. The red line represents the amount of open ground of the site that is visible where views to the proposed housing would be largely unscreened.
3. The blue line represents the approximate extent of the site with Fields 3 to 6 generally screened by mature trees and hedgerows on the site itself.
4. The view currently assists in connecting the town visually with its landscape setting and allows an appreciation of the location and character of the nearby Cotswolds AONB.
5. This is an 'everyday' type of view and will likely be the most frequently taken view to the proposed development given the quantum of traffic on Priors Road.

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**Figure Title**  
 Figure 1 - Viewpoint 5

<b>Date</b> 21/10/20	<b>Scale</b> Not to scale
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<b>Job No</b> 20-386	<b>Figure No</b> 01 - Sheet 5	<b>Rev</b>
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# Figure 1:Viewpoint 6 – View from Harp Hill looking north and east towards Cheltenham and AONB



Flat roof of Sainsbury's      Lone open field tree in Field 1      Open ground of Field 1 slope allows wider view out      Line of Cotswold escarpment running to the north bounding Cheltenham      Masts at Cleeve Common visible  
 Red and blue line indicate that development would stretch across this view and alter the fore and mid-ground of the scene      Hedge between Fields 1 & 2 with site's mature trees beyond

Date of photography – 18/8/20  
 Camera – Canon EOS 6D  
 Height of lens – 1.5m  
 Lens focal length – 50mm f-stop f/5.6  
 No. of photographs stitched – 4  
 Approximate distance to Site –2m

## Notes

1. View taken from gap in hedge that appears to have been an unauthorised point of entry onto the slopes to walk dogs.
2. The red and blue lines indicate the development would stretch across the whole view.
3. The development would form a new foreground top the scene and effectively block out the view to the mid-ground of Cheltenham laid out at the foot of escarpment.
4. The upper slopes of the escarpment would not be blocked by the built form of the development, instead they would be blocked by the proposed screening tree line when it establishes.
5. The slopes are predominately open and fundamentally rural in character even with the urban form of Cheltenham set to their north.
6. The ability to see the masts to the south of Cleeve Common indicates inter-visibility with this key part of the escarpment as indicated on VP's 15 & 16.

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**Figure Title**  
 Figure 1 - Viewpoint 6

<b>Date</b> 21/10/20	<b>Scale</b> Not to scale
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<b>Job No</b> 20-386	<b>Figure No</b> 01 - Sheet 6	<b>Rev</b>
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# Figure I:Viewpoint 7 – View from Footpath Cheltenham 86 looking east across Site



Remnant farm buildings to low side of slopes    Vegetation of hedgerow and trees along path    Steeply sloping ground of Field 1 is fully evident in 'side-on' views    Field 1 – Field 2 hedgerow limits open ground views further east

Site benefits from mature trees and tall hedgerows    Distant backdrop of escarpment with apparent unbroken countryside link from the Site to it

Date of photography – 18/8/20  
 Camera – Canon EOS 6D  
 Height of lens – 1.5m  
 Lens focal length – 50mm f-stop f/8  
 No. of photographs stitched – 4  
 Approximate distance to Site – 2m

## Notes

1. View east from Public Footpath Cheltenham 86 that runs immediately west of the site at the edge of houses off Wessex Drive.
2. The footpath is well hedged on the field side but there are breaks, both visually and desire lines where sight to the adjacent Field 1 and beyond to the rest of the escarpment are taken.
3. This 'side-on' view illustrates the steeply sloping nature of the site's topography as part of the escarpment slopes.
4. The extent of the foreground view is Field 1 with the mature hedgerow compartmentalising sight.
5. Mature trees in site's mid-ground and views to open ground offsite suggest an open stretch of countryside running to the distant visible escarpment that forms the backdrop.
6. In reality this is only a visual link as the developments of Oakley Grange and Hewlett's covered reservoir set a physical barrier at the west end of the site.
7. The red and blue lines indicate that development would be evident across the whole of this view.

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**Figure Title**  
 Figure I - Viewpoint 7

<b>Date</b> 21/10/20	<b>Scale</b> Not to scale
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<b>Job No</b> 20-386	<b>Figure No</b> 01 - Sheet 7	<b>Rev</b>
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# Figure 1:Viewpoint 8 – View looking east along Harp Hill in the vicinity of the proposed site entrance



Southern boundary hedge to site

Hedge and mature tree combine to screen open views across Site

New entrance approximately at Deer warning sign

Houses of Harp Hill will have views across site from upper storey room

No footpaths on either side of the road with grass verges with access through most frequent

Date of photography – 18/8/20  
 Camera – Canon EOS 6D  
 Height of lens – 1.5m  
 Lens focal length – 50mm f-stop f/5.6  
 No. of photographs stitched – 4  
 Approximate distance to Site – 10m

## Notes

1. View along Harp Hill in the vicinity of the proposed site entrance.
2. The relatively high hedge to the site's southern boundary limits open views down the slopes to breaks such as field entrances.
3. A break in the hedge will be required to allow access onto the site, the extent of visibility splays where hedge removal and re-planting is required is suggested as on the preliminary access drawing.
4. This indicates a west visibility splay of 49m and an easterly one of 44m. The drawing indicates approximately 55m of hedgerow would need to be removed to accommodate these splays.
5. Sight through the new access will allow an appreciation of the scale of development on the lower part of the slopes.
6. The character of this part of Harp Hill will be altered with a major feeder road altering the sense of countryside to the left (north) of the road.
7. Apparent 1.8m wide footpaths would run around the bell mouth of the new access and then stop.
8. There are no footpaths on either side of this part of Harp Hill at the moment.
9. Depending on potential highway requirements such as ghost islands, pedestrian refuges, illuminated bollards and the like the street scene of Harp Hill will change.
10. Reduction to the height of the hedge for highway safety or land management purposes will open up the view down the slope.

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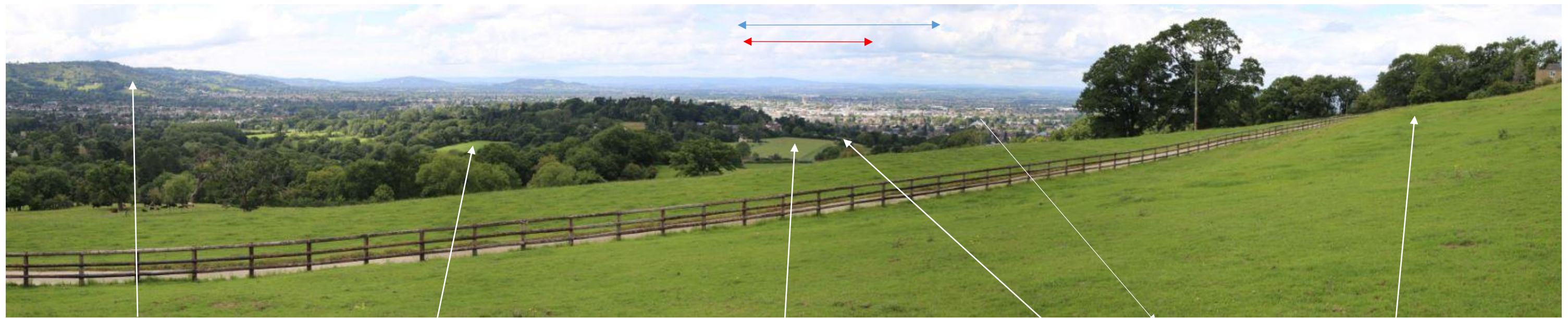
**Project**  
 Oakley Farm Pasture Slopes, Cheltenham

**Figure Title**  
 Figure 1 - Viewpoint 8

<b>Date</b> 21/10/20	<b>Scale</b> Not to scale
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<b>Job No</b> 20-386	<b>Figure No</b> 01 - Sheet 8	<b>Rev</b>
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# Figure 1:Viewpoint 9 – View from Charlton Kings Footpath 12 looking west towards site



Escarpment running to east of Cheltenham      Pasture fields set within apparent woodland belts      Flat grass of Hewlett's covered reservoir      Listed pavilion adjacent to site      Pasture field on escarpment with bands of trees

East end Harp Hill houses are discernible in the view      Elevated views of Cheltenham in mid-ground

Date of photography – 18/8/20  
 Camera – Canon EOS 6D  
 Height of lens – 1.5m  
 Lens focal length – 50mm f-stop f/2.8  
 No. of photographs stitched – 4  
 Approximate distance to Site – 960m

## Notes

1. View from due east of the site from Public Footpath Charlton Kings 12.
2. The blue arrow denotes the approximate extent of the site and the red arrow the extent of the open ground visible.
3. Hewlett's covered reservoir with its pan flat roof appears slightly odd in the sloping topography of the scene and screens sight to the east of Field 3 adjacent to it.
4. Viewed within the context of another section of the escarpment the landscape similarities of topography, land use and tree and hedge pattern are clearly evident.
5. The proposed houses of Field 3 and the access road to them would be visible.
6. Hewlett's covered reservoir would effectively become the visible edge the AONB on Harp Hill.



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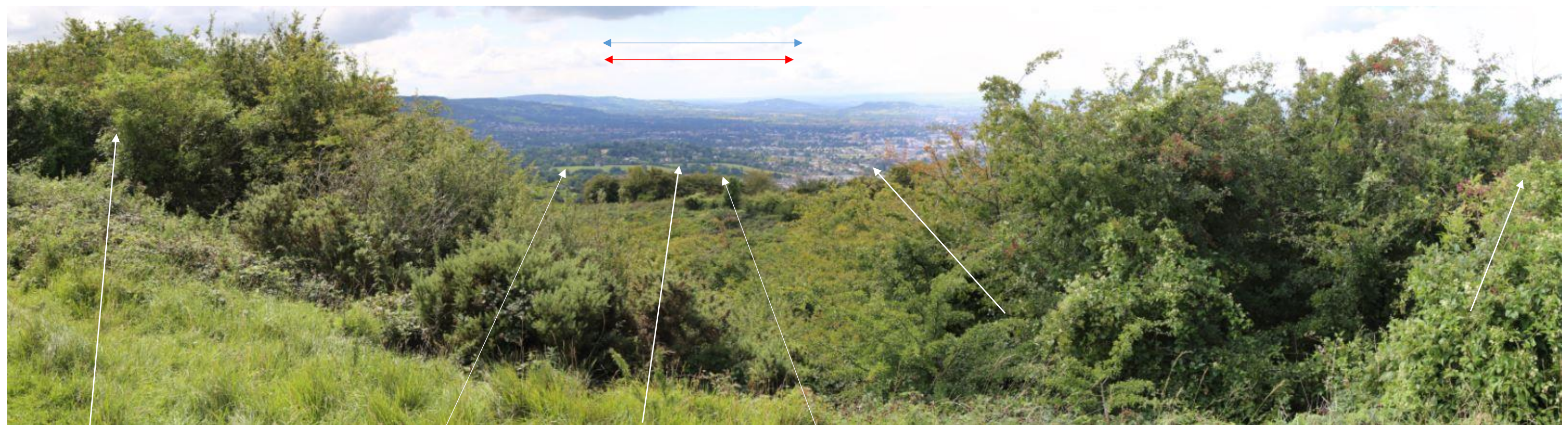
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**Figure Title**  
Figure 1 - Viewpoint 9

<b>Date</b> 21/10/20	<b>Scale</b> Not to scale
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<b>Job No</b> 20-386	<b>Figure No</b> 01 - Sheet 9	<b>Rev</b>
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Figure 1:Viewpoint 10 – View from Cotswolds Way looking south west towards Site



Scrub adjacent to path sometimes screens / frames views to site

Three fields form a distinctive pattern in the view  
East end is the grass roof of Hewlett's covered reservoir

Broadside of slope seen and development would connect Harp Hill and Oakley Grange together  
Mature tree collection in Fields 4, 5 & 6

Date of photography – 18/8/20  
Camera – Canon EOS 6D  
Height of lens – 1.5m  
Lens focal length – 50mm f-stop f/5.6  
No. of photographs stitched – 4  
Approximate distance to Site – 2.1km

### Notes

1. View taken from a Public Footpath Southam 102 that forms part of the Cotswold Way.
2. The blue arrow denotes the approximate extent of the site and the red arrow the extent of the open ground visible.
3. The three fields are clearly evident in the view with the field pattern set with and against a mature tree backdrop contributing attractive elements to the overall view.
4. The open green fields of the site contribute positively to the appearance of the eastern settlement edge of Cheltenham.
5. Development of the three fields would be readily noticeable with built form running up the hill.
6. The public open space to the north of the site would not retain the same sense of openness as the current fields and would be screened from this viewpoint by initially the new houses and then the tree screen planted to their south.

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**Figure Title**  
Figure 1 - Viewpoint 10

**Date**  
21/10/20

**Scale**  
Not to scale

**Job No**  
20-386

**Figure No**  
01 - Sheet 10

**Rev**

# Figure I:Viewpoint II – View from Cotswolds Way looking south west towards Site



Cotswold Way national trail giving extensive views along escarpment

Oakley Grange properties running up to site's lower northern boundary

Open ground of playing fields at end of Imjin Road and tree planting within cemetery.

Date of photography – 18/8/20  
 Camera – Canon EOS 6D  
 Height of lens – 1.5m  
 Lens focal length – 50mm f-stop f/8  
 No. of photographs stitched – 5  
 Approximate distance to Site – 2.2m

## Notes

1. View taken from a Public Footpath Southam 102 again that forms part of the Cotswold Way.
2. The blue arrow denotes the approximate extent of the site and the red arrow the extent of the open ground visible.
3. A similar range of visual change would take place as per VP10 even though the viewpoint is approximately 300m further north indicating the site is in view for a duration of time rather than glimpsed views.
4. The three fields are clearly evident in the view with the field pattern set with and against a mature tree backdrop contributing attractive elements to the overall view.
5. The open green fields of the site contribute positively to the appearance of the eastern settlement edge of Cheltenham.
6. Development of the three fields would be readily noticeable with built form running up the hill and linking two other development areas together.
7. A greater extent of the Cotswold escarpment is visible from this position.



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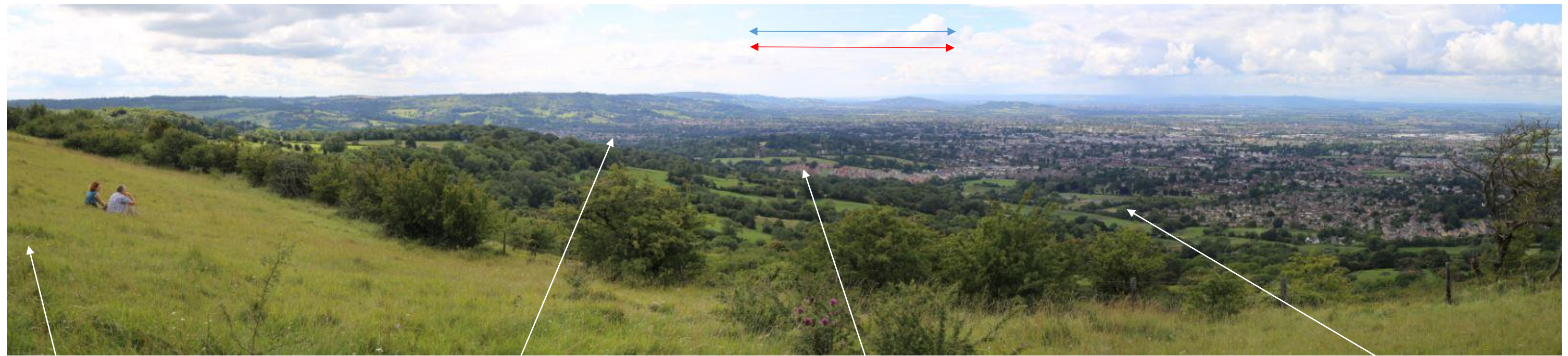
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**Figure Title**  
Figure I - Viewpoint II

<b>Date</b> 21/10/20	<b>Scale</b> Not to scale
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<b>Job No</b> 20-386	<b>Figure No</b> 01 - Sheet II	<b>Rev</b>
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# Figure 1:Viewpoint 12 – View from Bill Smyllie Reserve looking south west towards Site



Cotswold Way to left

Development at site would appear to stretch towards Charlton Kings

Oakley Grange properties running up to site's lower northern boundary

Cheltenham settlement edge punctuated with open, green space running between sections of built form

Date of photography – 18/8/20  
 Camera – Canon EOS 6D  
 Height of lens – 1.5m  
 Lens focal length – 50mm f-stop f/5.6  
 No. of photographs stitched – 4  
 Approximate distance to Site – 2.3km

## Notes

1. View from the upper part of escarpment back towards the lower escarpment slopes that fringe Cheltenham.
2. Blue line demarks the approximate extent of the proposed development and the red the visible portion of Site from this location.
3. The site's three fields again appear as an unbroken stretch of open countryside running down the slope towards Cheltenham.
4. Views give an indication of the different parts of the town.
5. Development running up the hill would close sense of separation between Oakley Grange area and Charlton Kings with the wooded high ground at Battledown being the only sense of remaining separation.

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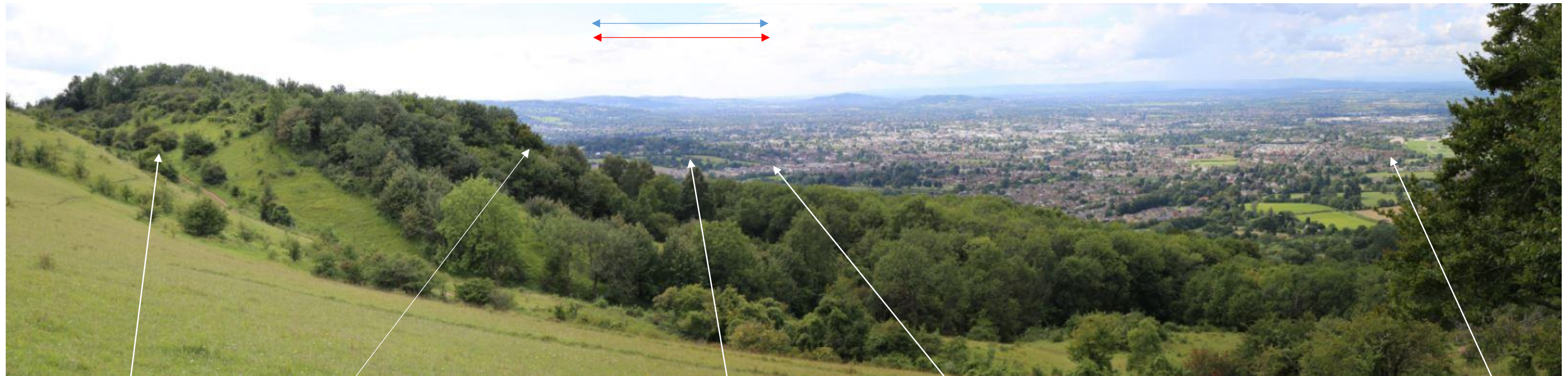
**Figure Title**  
 Figure 1 - Viewpoint 1

<b>Date</b> 21/10/20	<b>Scale</b> Not to scale
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<b>Job No</b> 20-386	<b>Figure No</b> 01 - Sheet 12	<b>Rev</b>
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# Figure I:Viewpoint I3 – View from Bill Smyllie Reserve looking south west towards Site



Happy Valley section of reserve

Prominence of the site's fields increased by foreground framing

Development at site would appear to fill up gap in urban form

Site appears as one of the last remaining pieces of open ground to east of town from this viewpoint

Greater Cheltenham on flat ground running into Vale of Gloucester.

Date of photography – 18/8/20  
 Camera – Canon EOS 6D  
 Height of lens – 1.5m  
 Lens focal length – 50mm f-stop f/5.6  
 No. of photographs stitched – 4  
 Approximate distance to Site – 2.6km

## Notes

1. View taken from footpath to north east side of the reserve near block of mixed woodland.
2. Blue line demarks the approximate position of the proposed development and the red line the estimated extent of built form visible.
3. With the screening and framing of the foreground hill it emphasises the position and openness of the site.
4. A series of views unfold as users walk through the reserve with sight cut off when walking through Happy Valley.

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 Oakley Farm Pasture Slopes, Cheltenham

**Figure Title**  
 Figure I - Viewpoint I3

<b>Date</b> 21/10/20	<b>Scale</b> Not to scale
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<b>Job No</b> 20-386	<b>Figure No</b> 01 - Sheet 13	<b>Rev</b>
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# Figure I:Viewpoint I4 – View from edge of Cleeve Common looking south towards Site



Escarpment slopes with pasture and scrub land-use and texture running towards site

Oakley Grange evident running up lower slope

Racecourse to north side of town

High hanger wood that is visible from Site

Date of photography – 18/8/20  
 Camera – Canon EOS 6D  
 Height of lens – 1.5m  
 Lens focal length – 50mm f-stop f/4  
 No. of photographs stitched – 4  
 Approximate distance to Site – 3.2km

## Notes

1. Panorama taken from track approximately 300m west of the Cleeve Common masts near a prominent hanger woodland copse.
2. Blue line demarks the approximate extent of the proposed development and the red the visible portion of Site from this location.
3. Cleeve Common is a popular visitor destination on the escarpment and is managed for the benefit of wildlife, people and farming.
4. The three larger fields 1 to 3 are readily visible from the parts of the common edge looking south with the broader axis of the site presented to the viewer.

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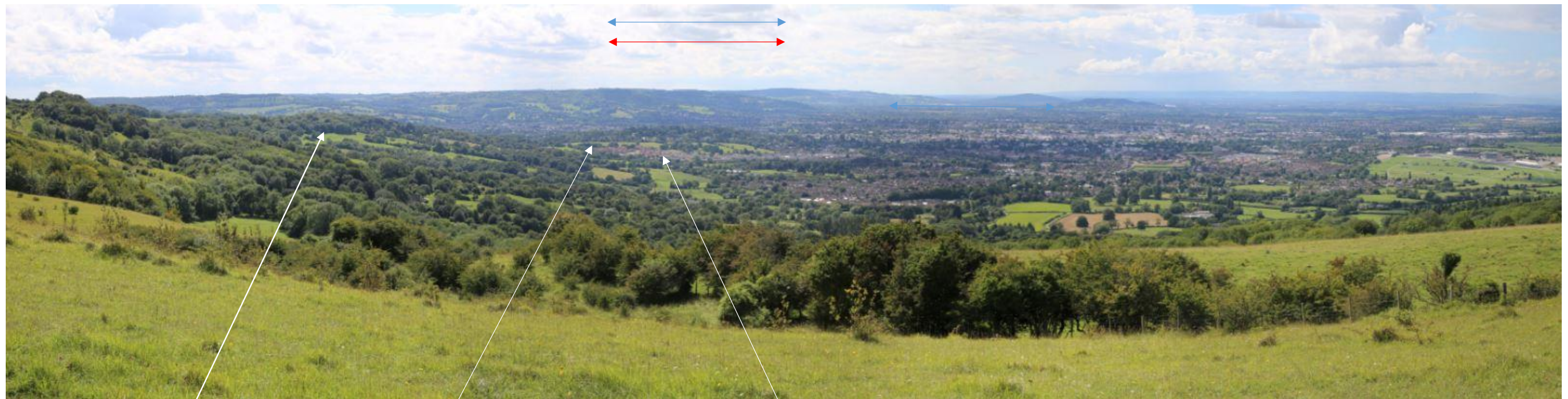
**Project**  
 Oakley Farm Pasture Slopes, Cheltenham

**Figure Title**  
 Figure I - Viewpoint I4

<b>Date</b> 21/10/20	<b>Scale</b> Not to scale
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<b>Job No</b> 20-386	<b>Figure No</b> 01 - Sheet I4	<b>Rev</b>
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# Figure 1:Viewpoint 15 – View from slope below Cleeve Common Masts looking south towards Site



Mix of pasture and woods give texture to escarpment slopes

Same texture continues onto site

Oakley Grange houses appear as a contrast to form and texture of escarpment slope

The site and Hewlett's covered reservoir form a narrow band of green open ground to continue natural form of escarpment

Date of photography – 18/8/20  
 Camera – Canon EOS 6D  
 Height of lens – 1.5m  
 Lens focal length – 50mm f-stop f/5.6  
 No. of photographs stitched – 4  
 Approximate distance to Site – 1690m

## Notes

1. Panorama taken from Public Footpath Southam 67.
2. Blue line demarks the approximate extent of the proposed development and the red the visible portion of Site from this location.
3. This view is actually taken from land within the Tewkesbury Borough Council area.
4. A broad side of the Site is visible and an appreciation of where it sits within the wider setting of Cheltenham.
5. A block of houses as proposed would make it the highest apparent mass development up the slopes in this part of Cheltenham.
6. Even though the Harp Hill houses are already higher than the site they are not readily visible as they are a single line of houses instead of a housing area with depth.

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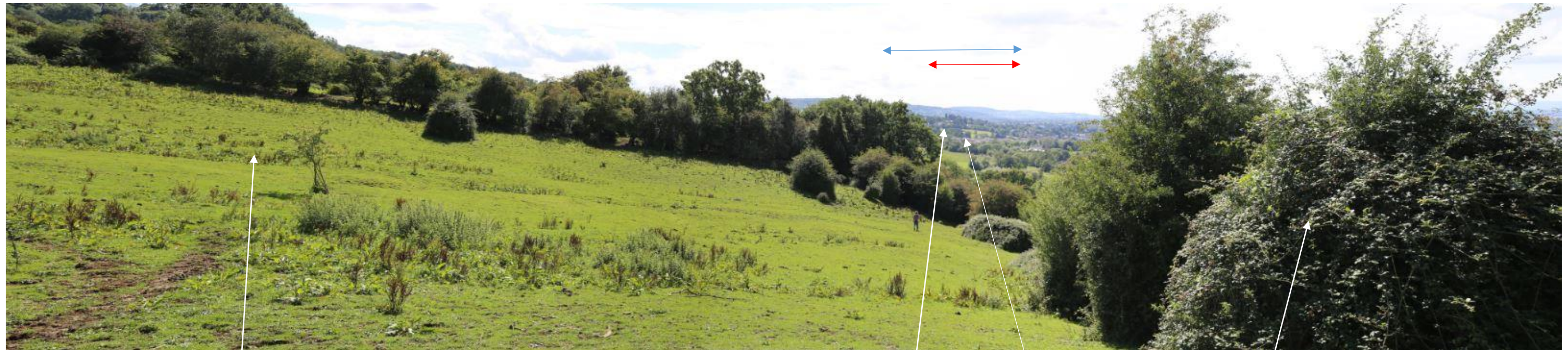
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**Figure Title**  
 Figure 1 - Viewpoint 15

<b>Date</b> 21/10/20	<b>Scale</b> Not to scale
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<b>Job No</b> 20-386	<b>Figure No</b> 01 - Sheet 15	<b>Rev</b>
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Figure 1:Viewpoint I6 –View from near Noverton looking south west towards Site



Sloping ground of escarpment but lower down so tree lines partially screen site

Fields 1 & 2 form are of open ground at end of mid-ground

Hedge and tree lines screen out views to wider Cheltenham

The mature trees of Fields 4, 5 & 6 screen out views to lower part of Field 2 but not Field 1

Date of photography – 18/8/20  
 Camera – Canon EOS 6D  
 Height of lens – 1.5m  
 Lens focal length – 50mm f-stop f/5.6  
 No. of photographs stitched – 4  
 Approximate distance to Site – 1.75km

**Notes**

1. Panorama taken from Public Footpath Southam 20 in the Cotswolds AONB and also set in Tewkesbury Borough.
2. Blue line demarks the approximate extent of the proposed development and the red the visible portion of Site from this location.
3. Layers of vegetation screen out the eastern side of the site in this view.
4. Field boundary vegetation prevent expansive views lower down the slopes but there is still a sense of the greater sloping escarpment, it linear arrangement and associated elevated views.
5. If this view is taken by other wellies are advised as ground conditions are very wet with a number of spring points and poached ground even in summer conditions.



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**Figure Title**  
 Figure 1 - Viewpoint I6

<b>Date</b> 21/10/20	<b>Scale</b> Not to scale
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<b>Job No</b> 20-386	<b>Figure No</b> 01 - Sheet 16	<b>Rev</b>
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